



## ***AOT in Action***

### ***TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!***

*Issue 109 – May 22, 2006*

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

#### **A Message from the Director:**

Good morning.

Last week I was honored to take part in the Greater Phoenix Convention and Visitors Bureau 2006 Annual Meeting and accept a Visitor Industry Champion Award on behalf of the entire Arizona Office of Tourism. It is always a privilege to be in a room full of professionals who are dedicated to promoting our amazing state. The meeting was a great chance for all of us to hear about upcoming plans and past successes for the Phoenix travel and tourism market. Keynote speaker Peter C. Yesawich, Chairman and CEO of Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown & Russell, gave a dynamic presentation with great news for the Arizona visitor industry and information on how our state continues to rise in the rankings of most popular vacation destinations. I also want to congratulate Debbie Johnson for the Visitor Industry Champion Award she received for her commitment to Arizona's tourism industry. Debbie is a passionate supporter of our industry, and it is truly an honor to work with her.

As the deadline approaches, I want to encourage everyone to submit their nominations for our 2006 Governor's Tourism Awards. These prestigious awards represent the exceptional accomplishments in our tourism industry during the previous year, and it is always an honor to be on hand to recognize the part we all play in improving the quality of life for residents of the Grand Canyon State. It is always so exciting to be a part of such an inspiring award. Whether you are new to the industry or submitted a nomination last year, we invite you to submit your nominations before May 31st.

This weekend is Memorial Day, which often marks the beginning of the summer travel season. I hope that when you are planning upcoming vacations and family outings you will remember that the Grand Canyon State is full of adventure, relaxation and wonderful

experiences. Don't forget to check out [www.arizonaguide.com](http://www.arizonaguide.com), [www.arizonatreasures.gov](http://www.arizonatreasures.gov) and [www.arizonavacationvalues.com](http://www.arizonavacationvalues.com) for more information about our great state!

Have a great week.



Margie A. Emmermann  
Director  
Arizona Office of Tourism

## AOT News Flash

### Arizona Hosts the Society of American Travel Writers Freelance Council

Arizona rolled out the welcome mat last week for the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) Freelance Council annual meeting. AOT was a medallion sponsor of the event, which was organized by the "Arizona Rocks" communities of Flagstaff, Williams and Page. This prestigious conference brought together nearly 50 of the nation's top freelance writers for a business meeting, and more importantly, some quality time to explore the Grand Canyon State. During the conference, the group visited each of the host communities and experienced some of the amazing activities you can do in each area. In addition, AOT organized pre-and post-conference familiarization tours around the state, giving the writers an opportunity to explore other areas of Arizona. Congratulations to the Arizona Rocks communities for hosting a fantastic event and leaving a wonderful lasting impression of the Grand Canyon State with these writers. For additional information, contact Jacki Mieler at [jmieler@azot.gov](mailto:jmieler@azot.gov).

## Promoting - AZ - Advertising

### Gen X Marketing Campaign Results

In the February 27th edition of *AOT in Action*, AOT announced the launch of a regional campaign targeting the Gen X markets in San Diego and Las Vegas. The goal of this "Mystery Campaign" was to drive Gen X audiences to targeted Web sites at [www.EscapeVegas.com](http://www.EscapeVegas.com) and [www.EscapeSanDiego.com](http://www.EscapeSanDiego.com) without revealing specific destination information. The keys to this campaign included unique creative pieces, non-traditional marketing vehicles and exciting Web sites that would hold the attention of the target audience. The media plan was developed to ensure that targets were exposed several times in the course of their normal day to the "mystery" of what EscapeVegas.com or EscapeSanDiego.com were all about. The expectation was that the

consumer would be compelled to visit the Web site to satisfy their curiosity. Media tactics included online advertising; e-mail blasts; radio; dry cleaning bags; mall advertising; post cards at locations including cafes, bookstores and health clubs; wrapped buses; and coffee wraps. Over 45 million gross impressions were achieved through the media plan. The “Mystery Campaign” ran from March 1 through April 30, 2006 and generated results far exceeding industry standards.

#### San Diego Results:

- 18,181 visits to site from 3/1 to 4/30
- 11.01 percent click-thru rate from e-blasts (industry average is around 0.5 percent to 1 percent)
- Average between 5-7 page views per visit (national average is 1.1)

#### Las Vegas Results:

- 7,326 visits to site from 3/1 to 4/30
- 9.14 percent click-thru rate from e-blasts (industry average is around 0.5 percent to 1 percent)
- Average between 5-7 page views per visit (national average is 1.1)

For more information or to view media or creative samples, please contact Traci Gomes at 602-374-3705 or [tgomes@azot.gov](mailto:tgomes@azot.gov).

## Industry News

### Exhibit at Expo Vacaciones Sonora 2006

Members of Arizona's tourism industry are invited to exhibit at Expo Vacaciones Sonora 2006, a three-day tourism event for the public in Hermosillo, Sonora on June 9-11 at the Expo Forum Convention Center. The fair is sponsored by the Sonora Office of Tourism, in cooperation with the Hotel and Motel Association of Sonora. The fair, which features hotels, motels and attractions from Sonora and border states in Mexico and the U.S., is expected to draw several thousand visitors. Booths are \$750 for the entire three-days and discounts are provided to government entities or non-profit organizations. Transportation and logistical support will be offered to US exhibitors by the Sonoran tourism office in Tucson. While this is the first time the fair will be hosted in Sonora, it has been successful in a number of other Mexican states. For details, call the Sonora Tourism Office at 1-800-476-6672, or [sonoratouristnews@hotmail.com](mailto:sonoratouristnews@hotmail.com) or visit the event Web site at [www.expovacacionessonora.com](http://www.expovacacionessonora.com).

### AAA: Driving Still the Cheapest Choice for Nearby Vacations

Although rising gas prices are making driving more expensive, AAA Arizona said driving costs are still cheaper than flying to most destinations this summer on board a national low-cost carrier. Basing its top driving destinations on the number of auto travel

bookings, AAA took those destinations with the highest amount of bookings and compared the costs of driving a 17-mile-per-gallon SUV to that destination versus flying. The auto club used Phoenix as its starting point and [www.fuelcostcalculator.com](http://www.fuelcostcalculator.com) to estimate the fuel costs. Airfares were taken from Southwest Airlines, including taxes. "We found the costs of flying and driving to these destinations to be very close for individuals," said Yvette Lopez, a AAA Arizona spokesperson. "But for budget-minded families, it looks like driving will be their best bet, not to mention a great way to catch up on bonding time." For a family of four driving from Phoenix to Las Vegas it would cost a total of \$106. Flying would cost \$111 per person, or \$444 for the entire family. The result, driving would save the family \$338. AAA Arizona reports the average pump price in Phoenix Friday was \$3.13 per gallon and \$3.15 in Las Vegas. For more: [www.aaaaz.com](http://www.aaaaz.com). (Phoenix Business Journal, [www.bizjournals.com/phoenix](http://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix))

## **Holiday Travel to Rise Slightly**

The number of Americans driving and flying over the Memorial Day holiday weekend is expected to rise only slightly this year as consumers respond to the rising cost of airfares, hotel rooms and motor fuel, according to forecasts by AAA and the Travel Industry Association. AAA said 37.6 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more, or about 1 percent more than last year--based on a national telephone survey of 1,500 adults. More than 80 percent of those travelers will take road trips, while another 10 percent will fly. The remainder will be packed into trains and buses. The AAA/TIA forecasts will be released later this morning at a Washington news conference. According to TIA's Summer 2006 Forecast, Americans will take 325.6 million leisure person-trips during June, July and August. "I am concerned about a number of economic indicators with gasoline prices and the pocket-book impact they're having leading the way," said Dr. Suzanne Cook, TIA's senior vice president of research. Cook said that gasoline prices of \$3 per gallon could be the "tipping point" for many Americans. (AP; Detroit News.com/Business; Page 1C, Miami Herald; Special to Travel Advance)

## **International Pow Wow Generates Billions in Travel Business**

This month, more than 5,000 travel industry delegates from 70 countries were in Orlando, Florida for the 38th Annual International Pow Wow. With more than 99 percent of mutual appointment requests fulfilled adding up to 47,000 pre-scheduled appointments between U.S. travel suppliers and international buyers taking place, TIA estimates that International Pow Wow will generate more than \$4 billion in travel to the U.S. over the next three years. More than 300 international and domestic media turned out for Pow Wow. TIA President and CEO Roger Dow and TIA National Chair and Chairman Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Jay Rasulo held a standing-room only press conference on international visitation and facilitation. Delegates enjoyed the theme park thrills of Orlando during spectacular evening events sponsored by SeaWorld Orlando, Universal Studios Orlando, and the grand finale at Disney's Animal Kingdom with grammy-award winning artist Donna Summer. (TIA e-Newsline, 5/18)

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